

Moran: Middle East Peace Negotiations Must Ensure Israel's Security

Middle East Leaders Will Resume Direct Talks for First Time in 20 Months

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Jerry Moran issued the following statement in response to an announcement today by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas have been invited to Washington, D.C. on September 2nd to re-launch direct Middle East peace talks. The talks will resume following a dinner hosted by President Obama on September 1

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, which will include both Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and Jordan's King Abdullah, as well as the representative of the Quartet, Tony Blair.

"Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has called for direct negotiations for months and finally the Palestinian Authority has agreed," Moran said. "I am hopeful that an agreement can be reached that results in lasting peace and guarantees Israel's security. To achieve this goal the U.S. must work closely with our ally Israel and refrain from imposing any peace plan. In addition, Arab states should support negotiations by recognizing Israel's right to exist."

To help facilitate peace talks, Netanyahu announced in June 2009, that he accepted and was prepared to negotiate a two-state solution to the conflict. Furthermore, in November 2009, Netanyahu announced a 10-month moratorium on the construction of new homes in the West Bank. Additionally, Israel has removed hundreds of West Bank checkpoints and roadblocks since April 2008 and is working with the Palestinian Authority to enhance the capabilities and effectiveness of Palestinian security forces in the West Bank.

Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas have agreed to place a one-year time limit on the talks.

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